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NATIONAL DEFENCE: A STUDY IN MILITARISM. By J. Ramsay MacDonald, M.P. London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1917. Pp. 132. Price, 2s. 6d. net.

Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's essay on anti-militarism covers a good deal of ground. His main thesis is that if there is an army there will be a fight, just as Merimée said that the essential point of a duel is that each party should have pistols and powder. Therefore in the interests of peace, there must be no armies, no preparedness, for "there is no half-way abiding-place between absolute peace and absolute militarism." He is *intransigent* on the point, and will have nothing to do with Jaurès' famous idea of a citizen army, on the grounds that a citizen army is no more pacific than any other; and that the distinction between offence and defence in war is often obscure, and has often been deliberately obscured in times of national crisis. His chapter on "National Defence and a Citizen Army" is an interesting criticism upon the *Armée Nouvelle* of Jaurès, who believed that "a nation in arms is necessarily a nation actuated by justice and uprightness" and that in consequence it will only engage in wars of defence and of liberty. But a nation in arms thinks more in camps, and obeys the suggestions of militarism more readily than a nation not in arms (p. 35). Universal military training certainly did not raise any barrier against war in France or Germany.

Instead of the existing order of competing alliances in Europe, which cannot make for peace, he looks, like many recent writers, to a federation of nations, linked by open, democratic diplomacy. He differs from one group of thinkers, however, in refusing to admit armed force as a weapon of this new international diplomacy. Democratic organisations of the various nations (labour in particular) are to get together (as soon as peace appears upon the horizon) and confer; and, free from the old traditions and modes of diplomacy, agree about an international action which will be co-operative and "express the really pacific national wills." But he has already told us that the international socialist movement was impotent to prevent war, and that the current down the rapids sped too swiftly since the Agadir incident for any unofficial international pacifist movement to withstand it. Is there anything to show that democratic organisations will have a fuller share of power to-day or to-morrow?

A chapter on "A Democratic Germany and Peace" is a significant warning to those who expect the Germans to translate

military defeat into a pacific democracy. The Germans may rid themselves of their reigning house, as the French rid themselves of Napoleon III in 1871, without wishing to forget the war.

M. J.

THE WRACK OF THE STORM. By Maurice Mæterlinck. Translated by Alexander Teixeira de Mattos. London: Methuen and Company, Ltd., 1916. Pp. x, 278. Price, 5s. net.

The title of M. Mæterlinck's book is in significant contrast with M. Rolland's, who is apparently above the storm that is shaking the world. M. Mæterlinck is in it; "I tried to lift myself above the fray, but the higher I rose I saw the justice of one cause and the infamy of the other." As a good patriot, M. Mæterlinck for the first time utters words of malediction, for in rejecting hatred he would have "shown himself a traitor to love." The volume contains all the essays published and all the speeches delivered by M. Mæterlinck since the beginning of the war; but at the end of the book is printed a sketch in the manner of the Flemish primitives, first printed in 1886, which strikes the reader rather as a make-weight than as a sort of "vague symbolic prophecy of the behaviour of the Germans in Belgium."

Many of the papers are remarkable for the fine yet simple quality of his rhetoric, and when speaking of the dead and the part played by Belgium and Italy in the war. "In Memoriam," "Heroism," and "The dead do not die" will bear re-reading for their compelling eloquence; and as such effective rhetoric does not flourish in England or America, we welcome it in M. Briand's speeches, and in M. Mæterlinck's writings. In the essay called "The Will of Earth," he gives us a new theory. Earth, or Nature, he tells us, is not infallible; it openly favours brute and physical force, while the will of humanity (or at least a portion of humanity) seeks to set up an empire of more subtle and less animal forces. Hitherto Earth's will has always won; but now "the adverse will is encountering an unexpected and unsurmountable resistance. If this resistance, as we can now no longer doubt, maintains itself victoriously to the end, there will never perhaps have been such a sudden change in the history of mankind; for man will have gained over the will of Earth, or Nature, or fatality, triumph infinitely more significant, more heavily fraught with consequences, and perhaps more decisive than all those which, in other provinces appear to have crowned